

" O H WHAT A WIFE "

Property of-----

Johnnie Spear

"OH WHAT A WIFE"

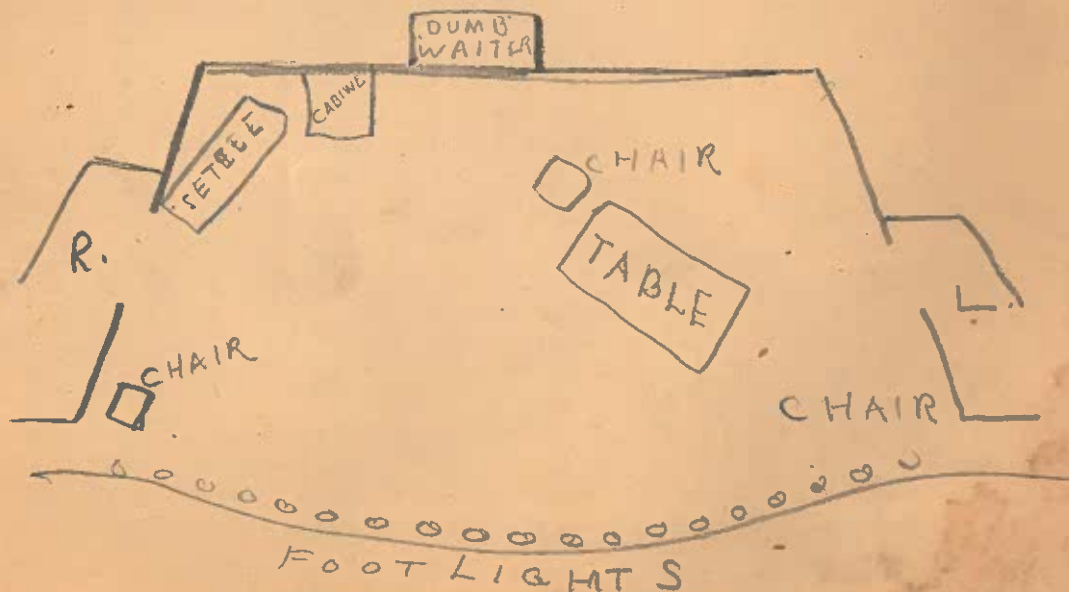
CHARACTERS

Bert Bizbee..... Light Comedy
Jack Williams.....; Light Comedy
Robert Wesley..... Juvenile
Muggs.....; Tough Burglar
Bella..... Snubrette
Aunt Salina Buttons..... Character Comedy

PROPS

Dumb waiter
Telephone
Settee
Library table
Three Chairs
Wine Decanter
Table cloth for table
Little basket colored paper

Three bottles wine Elixer
Suit Case
Flash light
Baby dress
Glass
Little Cabinet
Lace Window Curtain
Table Lamp



(After opening, stage goes black. Muggs appears at window L, opens it and slowly steps in, his flash light playing about the room. Finally lands on wine cabinet. He smiles pours himself out a drink, just as he is about to drink, voices are heard off R)

Jack

Well now, boys, a good little drink won't hurt any of you before you go home to bed.

Bert

Where do you get that little stuff, huh?

Jack

Well, there's plenty of it, come on in and help yourself. (they approach the D R)

Muggs

(flashes light hastily about the room, sets glass down on table. Finally his light falls upon the dumb waiter in the E of wall. Her rushes to it, throws it wide open and jumps in, shutting after him.)

Jack

(enters and turns on lights near door) Well, boys here we are. We've made a pretty good night of it, I think.

Bert

Aw, how can you say that when we didn't take one drink all the time we were out.

Robert

Poor Bert, that's been eating on him all evening, Jack. Bert, I thought you swore off drinking.

Bert

I did once for thirty minutes.

Jack

(laughing) Well, boys, I'll pour you out a real drink. (discovers glass full of wine on table) What the--- Well, how did that glass get there?

Robert

Didn't you put it there?

Jack

Well, hardly. Can you beat that there's a little drink all poured out and waiting for us.

Bert

Well, throw it this way.

Jack

(hands glass to Bert) There you are!

Bert

(drinks it) Not bad stuff!

Jack

Wait a minute! I had some rat poisoning in a glass the janitor gave me. I wonder if that could be what you drank, Bert.

Bert

Naw, I can tell rat poison. I've drank lots of it. This is real wine.

Jack

Want a drink, Robert?

Robert

No, I'm on the water wagon, Jack.

Jack

So am I. I'd be a happy married man today if I'd of sworn off before it was too late.

Robert

Tell me, Jack, did Bella leave you just on account of your drinking?

Jack

Well, that and one or two other little habits I had.

Bert

Well, you ought to feel glad of it. I've been a bachelor for thirty years, and look at me.

Robert

Its nothing to brag about. I wish I could find a little wife and settle down.

Bert

Yeh, and just the minute you get a wife and settle down, you have a million bills to settle up.

Jack

Bert, you're all wrong. I've been married, and I'll gladly say I wish my wife hadn't left me. I'm not happy carousing around like this. I wish my little wife would come back to me.

Bert

You're a glutton for punishment boy.

(telephone rings)

Jack

(crosses to phone) Well, I wonder who that could be. (takes down receiver) Hello! This is Mr Jack Williams speaking. Yes,---what---Aunt--- Aunt Salina Buttons! (smiling shyly) Oh yes, yes aunty, I'm tickled pink. Yes, come right up. Crestview apartments, Apartment Six. (drops receiver) Boys, get the stricnine, I'm gonna pass out!

Robert

What is it, Jack?

Jack

Aunt Salina Buttons!

Robert

Your aunt?

Jack

Yes, she just arrived and called up from the station that she was coming up to see me. Oh I can't see her.

Bert

How much you gimme to kill her?

Jack

Oh behave! This is really a serious situation. You see my aunt is wealthy in fact, she pays all of my expenses. She thinks that I am a talented young artist, and a happy married man. I am neither one. If she discovers that my wife and I are separated, she will cut me off without a penny.

Bert

Gee, that's tough. You'll have to go back to work, won't you?

Jack

Oh shut up! Don't wise crack, make some helpful suggestions. What will I do when my aunt discovers I have no wife.

Bert

Why don't you get some woman to play your wife while your aunt is here?

Jack

Who could I get?

Bert

Well, now that's as far as my brain will be taxed. Your aunt hasn't seen your wife before, has she?

Jack

No!

Bert

Well, then almost any body would do---the wash woman, that cross eyed girl with the wart on her nose----

Robert

Jack! I have it! Let Bert here dress up and be your wife?

Bert

Have you got any more damn fool suggestions?

Robert

It would be better than nothing, and your aunt will only stay a little while. You can tell her owing to the size of your apartment, she won't be able to sleep here.

Jack

Robert, you're a genius, and I have some of my wife's clothes in the bed room now. Bert, you go try them on.

Bert
You go jump in the sewer.

Jack
Listen, Bert, is that all your friendship means to me. You would refuse this little favor. Why, Bert, you wouldn't have me starve to death would you?

Bert
Listen, here, Jack, I'm not going in there and put on any of your wife's clothes. I'd look like a fool. How do you expect me to play your wife? I never was a lady before?

Jack
But you can be one just for thirty minutes can't you?

Bert
No!

Jack
All right then, consider our friendship at an end.

Bert
Aw, Jack, have a heart.

Robert
Go on, Bert, be a good fellow and be Jack's wife. You're a piker.

Bert
Hold on now. I never was a piker in my life.

Robert
When will you do it.

Bert
Yes I will!

Jack
Bert!

Bert
But remember, Jack, I am your wife in name only!

Jack
Go on in there and put something on. Now try and act like a lady in front of Aunty.

Bert
Something tells me I'm not going to like this so well. (exits R 1)

Robert
We're going to have a time with him, Jack.

Jack
Don't worry, I'll see that aunty don't stay any longer than is absolutely necessary.

Aunty
(rings bell R)

Robert
Some one's at the door.

Jack
Its, Aunty. (grabs wine and throws it in dumb waiter) She musn't see any liquor in here or she'll throw a fit. (goes to door R and opens it) Ah, come in, Aunty, dear.

Aunty
(enters R) Oh, Jack, you dear boy. How fine you look!

Jack
And you're looking nice too, Aunty.

Aunty
Well, I don't feel fine. My liver! Its terrible! I'm just living from one day to the next, and my dear boy, you shall soon inherit my entire fortune. It won't be long till I'll be in my grave.

Jack
Well, lets hope so, aunty.

Aunty
What!

Jack
I say lets hope its not sok aunty. But allow me introduce a friend of

mine. Mr Robert Wehaly, my aunt, Salina Buttons.

Aunty

I'm sharmed I'm sure. (silly grin)

Robert

I'm not so sure.

Jack

You know, Aunty, I'm afraid you won't be able to stay here, our apartment is so small you see we only have one bed.

Aunty

Well, that's perfectly all right. I'll catch the next train. I only came here for a little visit. I wouldn't think of staying long.

Jack

I'll put your suit case out of the way. (picks it up carelessly)

Aunty

Oh look out!

Jack

What is it?

Aunty

My bottle of Wine Elixer! If you've broken that, I'll never forgive you.

Jack

Wine Elixer, what do you do with that, Aunty.

Aunty

Oh its the most wonderful tonic. I feel like a new woman after two bottles of it.

Robert

She ought to, its about twenty three per cent alcohol.

Aunty

Jack, where is your loving little wife. I want to see her. You've written me so much about her, now I want to see the little dear.

Jack

Oh yes, aunty! She---

Aunty

Don't tell me she isn't at home.

Jack

Oh yes, she 's home all right.

Aunty

Tell, where is she?

Jack

Why---er---she's dressing!

Aunty

Well, tell her to come out just as she is.

Jack

Oh no, I'll see if she's dressed. (goes to R) Oh, Bella dear, are you dressed?

Bert

Hell no, I can't get these damn pants to stay up!

Aunty

Horrors!

Jack

I'm going to kill that fool!

Aunty

Jack, is that your wife I heard?

Jack

No, no, thats the man down in the next apartment.

Robert

I'll go in and see if she's dressed. (starts g)

Aunty

Young man, how dare you enter her dressing room. Jack, do you allow that?

Jack

No, I should say not. I'll go see. (exits L 1)

Aunty

I smell trouble around here. Things aren't as they should be.

Robert

Won't you be seated, madam? (offers her an imaginary chair)

Aunty

(looking at him) Jack never did know how to pick good company!

Jack

(enters first, a little shame faced) Here---here it is is,--Aunty---

Bert

(enters in ridiculous outfit)

Aunty

(with outstretched arms) Bella!

Bert

(pulls up pants leg, and rushes to her) Aunty! (gets the giggles)
Oh pshaw I can't do it!

***** NUMBER *****
***** ONE *****

Maggs

(comes out of Dumb waiter, tries to get out window, apparently sees some one. Shakes head. Looks about room, eyes light upon Aunty's suit case. He grins, opens suit case and takes out the bottle of Wine Elixer. A noise is heard off L, he rushes back into dumb waiter again)

Jack

(entering L with Bert) Listen, Bert, you're not even trying to act like a lady.

Bert

Well, if you felt like I did you wouldn't try either.

Jack

You could at least watch yourself. Haven't you any imagination? Don't walk flat footed and bow legged like you did when you saw Auntie. Get that delicate, mincing little step that women take.

Bert

Say don't you like the way I'm doing your wife?

Jack

No I don't.

Bert

Then you do it yourself. (starts to take off clothes)

Jack

Wait a minute, wait a minute! I'm trying to show you what to do. Don't get hot headed. Look! Watch the way I walk. (walks in a rather exaggerated manner impersonating a woman's walk.)

Bert

Oh for God's sake Agnes, when did you arrive.

Jack

Bert, try and do this will you?

Bert

I can't, I aint built that way.

Jack

Go on. Do it!

Bert

Oh well I'll try. (does funny walk toward door R, gets half way there, and pants begin coming down) Oh darn it! (starts pulling up pants)

Aunty

(enters R) (stands there watching him amazed)

Jack

(motioning frantically for him to stop) Sssst! (kicks him side ways)

Bert
Say what the devil you trying to do.

Jack
(pointing to aunty) Look!

Bert
(sees her) Oh, hello aunty. (silly laugh)

Aunty
(coldly) How do you do.

Bert
Nice day isn't it, Aunty. (does exaggerated walk over to chair and sits down like any man would)

Aunty
Jack, your wife seems rather coarse.

Bert
Oh of course!

Jack
Well, you see, aunty, my little wife was raised in the country.

Bert
You're a liar.

Aunty
What!

Jack
Really, aunty, you mustn't mind her little eccentricities. I love my little wife with all my heart. (doubles up fist and looks at Bert)

Aunty
Oh now, tell me do you really live happily together.

Jack
Oh yes indeed!

Aunty
Well, I didn't know whether you did or not. I never see you kissing or hugging each other. Now, Jack why don't you go over and kiss your little wife?

Bert
Nothing doing. I got a weak stomach.

Jack
(to Bert) Shut up you, fool. Why of course, aunty, I'll kiss my little wife. (goes over to Bert) (sits on the arm of his chair puts arms around him) Aunty, don't you like my wife. I think she's the sweetest thing I've got. (starts to kiss Bert)

Bert
You do that and I'll beat the soup out of you!

Aunty
Oh, Mercy!

Jack
You'll have to excuse Bella, aunty. She's not feeling well.

Aunty
Maybe its her liver.

Bert
No, its these darn shoes!

Aunty
Let me see, Jack, how long have you been married now?

Jack
Well, just about a year and a half, aunty.

Aunty
A year and a half. Do you know what I expected when I came here?

Jack
No, what?

Aunty
I expected you and Bella to have a little----- well, you know an addition to the family.

Jack
You mean a---

Aunty
Yes, a little baby!

Bert
Now listen, here, Jack, I'll tell you right now there'll be none of that.

Aunty
Why, Bella, don't you believe in children.

Bert
Well to tell you the truth I never gave it much thought.

Aunty
Every woman should be a mother. Bella, haven't you ever felt the stir of a mother's heart?

Bert
Well, I should say not.

Aunty
I think that's terrible. Now right now I'm going to tell you both something. I'll be coming back to visit you in a year or so and if the isn't a little tot running about the household, I'll disinherit you. I give you one year!

Bert
(to Jack) You son of a gun, see what you've got me into now.

Jack
(looks at watch) Aunty, its near train time, don't you think.

Aunty
Yes, so it is. Landsakes, I'll have to have a little tonic before I go. Bella, you should take some of this Wine Elixer.

Bert
Well, gimme a quart.

Jack
Shut up!

Aunty
(opens suit case) Its the finest stuff I nearly ever saw. Oh! Its gone! My Wine Elixer is gone.

Jack
Oh surely not, aatny.

Aunty
It is is. Oh dear, what shall I do.

Jack
Can you get it at the drug store, aunty

Aunty
Yes.

Jack
Well, go get some wine to send you up some more that's all there is to that.

Aunty
Yes, I must have it. I can't get along without it. (exits R)

Jack
Bert, did you take her wine elixer?

Bert
I should say not.

Jack
Then how could it have disappeared?

Bert
Don't ask me, but I'm going to do the disappearing act myself. I've had enough of this.

Jack
No you're not, she'll be gone in a little while now.

Bert
Well, I'm going some where where I can smoke in peace then. I haven't had a cigar since I went into this blamed fool deal.

Jack
Don't let aunty see you smoking cigars.

Bert

Oh I suppose I'll have to go up on top of the roof to do it. (starts out, pants go e down) Confound these bloomers any way. (exit L 1)

Jack

Oh, what a wife I've got!

Bella

(enters R) Jack Williams, are you speaking about me?

Jack

Bella! My own real wife!

Bella

I've come back to get my clothes, Jack.

Jack

Oh, Bella, why can't we kiss and make up?

Bella

Its useless to plead, Jack. I told you I was tringhand I meant it. (sees suit case) Why whose suit case is that. Are you going away?

Jack

No, Bella, that's my aunt Salinas

Bella

Is your aunt here?

Jack

Yes, and what a mess I'm in.

Bella

How so?

Jack

Well, you know how opposed aunty is to divorce and separations. I didn't dare let her know you and I weren't living to gether any more. So I had to get some one to act as my wife.

Bella

Who did you get?

Jack

Bert Bizbee!

Bella

(laughs) Oh Jack!

Jack

Yes, and he's a terrible wife. I don't know what minute aunty will discover the deception. Oh if you had only been here. Bella, I'm apt to lose everyhthing.

Bella

That's too bad!

Jack

You mustn't let my aunt see you now. She wouldn't kn w who you were?

Bella

Well, I'll get my clothes and go. (starts for L 1)

Aunty

(enters R) (carries wine Elixer) Well I got it. (sees Bella) Oh I beg your pardon. Who is this woman, Jack?

Jack

Why---er---it---this---that--- she's a friend of my wifes. Jus t dropped in to see her.

Aunty

Oh, well, my dear I am pl ased to meet you.

Bella

Thank you!

Bert

(enters L 1) Bella, how are you. You came back did you?

Jack

(signals him to be quiet)

Aunty

Bella? Why is her name Bella too?

Jack
Oh yes, yes. Bella, your friend Bella has called to see you.

Bert
See me---why--

Jack
Yes, take her in the other room if you want to talk.

Robert
(off stage R arguing) But I say, you must let me out.

Voices
(off stage) Nothing doing! Get back in there, bo!

Robert
Oh this is terrible. (enters J)

Jack
What is it, Robert?

Robert
This place is quarantined for Small Pox, and nobody can get out.

Aunty
(dropping in chair) Oh Heavens!

Bella
What, you mean they are going to make us stay here?

Robert
Yes, there are guards all around the house. The janitor took sick and they took him to the hospital with Small Pox, now we are all quarantined.

Aunty
Oh dear, now I'll have to stay here till its over with.

Jack
But we have no room. Where would we all sleep?

Aunty
Well in a case like this, one has to be systematic. We'll have to make the best of things. Now I'll fix some blankets on the floor, and you men may sleep on them. As for we three women, we will sleep on the bed.

Bert
Oh no, I think I'd rather sleep on the floor. I might roll off the bed, aunty.

Aunty
Oh no you won't. We'll put you in the middle. Come, we will prepare for the night. (exits with Bella)

Bert
Jack, you hunt yourself another wife, I'm going.

Robert
But you can't get out.

Bert
But what am I going to do?

Aunty
(off stage) Come, Bella, dear! Its bed time.

Bert
Huh, huh, I aint sleepy.

Aunty
(enters L 1) But you must get to bed. Now get right in there. I'm going to manage things. Get! (yanks him out L 1)

Jack
Oh, Robert, what on earth, are we going to do now?

Robert
This makes it doubly complicated, doesn't it.

Jack
Bert will disgrace us all.

Robert
And there's no telling how long this quarantine will be on.

Jack
Oh who would have ever thought of a quarantine.

Bert
(off stage) On no, Aunty, I never sleep in a night gown.

Aunty
You don't! Landsakes, what do you wear to sleep in then?

Bert
Nothing.

Aunty
What!

Bert
Er ----I mean I just sleep in the clothes I've got on.

Aunty
Oh my heavens!

Jack
Robert, we've got to get that fool out of that room. (Jack and Robert exit L 1)

Muggs
(comes from out of dumb waiter, starts to crawl out window)

Voices
(off stage near window) You can't get out. Get back in there.

Muggs
Oh, shucks! (looks about room and finally gets under table)

Aunty
(enters L 1) Well, I give it up. Jack, you've married an animal.

Jack
Aunty, you must excuse her. She's not feeling well you know.

Aunty
She felt well enough to kick me in the stomach with her big feet!

Bert
(enters, looking like he had been through a terrible jumble.)

Aunty
(shames him) Aren't you ashamed of yourself? Tttttt! (Robert enters with Bella)

Bert
Aw, shut up, you old heiffer.

Aunty
What!

Jack
Bella, be quiet!

Bella
I'm afraid we can't plan on getting much sleep here.

Robert
This is going to be a terrible bore. We have nothing to amuse ourselves with.

Aunty
Oh yes, there is, I might entertain you with a little spiritualism.

Robert
Why are you a spiritualist.

Aunty
I am a medium, my dear man.

Bella
Oh how interesting. Can you really make connections with the spirit world.

Aunty
I should say I can. I've been known to move things.

Bert
I wish you 'd move yourself.

Aunty
Now watch me, I'm going to try and move that table. (does all sorts of funny gestures at table where Muggs is hiding) Arise! Arise!

Bert
(laughs) That old fool has got water on her spark plugs!

Aunty
Arise I say! (stamps foot)

Muggs
(raises table up)

Bert
Oh, murder!

Bella
Why look its raising up.
Jack

Aunty!

Aunty
See! See! I told you I had pyshic powers! (still gesturing with hands)
Move about the room.

Mugge
(Walks about the room and finally stops beside Bert's chair)

Bert
Get away from me, now. I don't know you!

Aunty
Oh I feel so proud. I really didn't know whether I could do that or not.
(holds hand to heart) My my hearts just pounding. I'm so excited. I'll
have to take some of my Wine Elixer. (gets bottle and pusses her self
out a drink. She sets the glass down near Bert who is sitting right
by the table.) You know this is certainly good medicine! I don't
know what I'd do without it.

Robert
Yeh. I got drunk onat one time.

Aunty
What did you say?

Robert
Nothing!

Mugge
(reaches out from table while no one is looking and takes glass under
table with him)

Aunty
Its a tonic, strictly a tonic! (starts to pick up glass) Why----where
is it? (looks at Bert)

Bert
What's the matter?

Aunty
I set a glass down by you?
Bert

Well?

Aunty
Strange to say its gone now.

Jack
Aunty, you don't mean to say a glass disappeared out of this room do
you?

Aunty
It certainly did, and I have my idea off where it went. (to Bert) Now
my dear, young woman; if you wanted a drink of my medicine you didn't
need to steal it. I'll give you another drink if you'll give me the
glass back.

Bert
Oh the old fool thinks I got it.

Aunty
Some queer goings on around here it peers to me. (turns away)

Mugge
(puts glass back on table, glass is now empty)

Jack
Are you looking for something, aunty?

Aunty
I want my glass to take my medicine. (looks on table) why there it is.

Bert
(looks and sees it) What the---

Aunty

I knew it. You vixen you had it all the time.

Bert

Oh I did not.

Aunty

Well I don't care about it. I just wanted the glass that was all.
(pours out drink) I'll hold on to this glass this time. (holds glass
and sets bottle down)

Jack

Now, Bella, you behave.

Bella

Why I'm not doing anything.

Jack

No, no I mean my wife.

Bella

(smiling) Oh!

Aunty

(smacks lips) There now, another one of those and I'll feel great

Robert

She'll be stewed before long now.

Mugge

(reaches out and grabs bottle)

Aunty

Yes, another one and I'll be ready for the night. (turns to get another
drink) Oh----my bottle! This is too much.

Bert

(getting up) What the heck! I aint got your bottle.

Aunty

Now don't lie. I set it down right beside you, and it isn't there. I
didn't mind the glass full, but when it comes to a whole bottle, thats
going too far.

Jack

Bella, do you know anything about her bottle?

Bert

No, nothing! I swear I don't.

Mugge

(sets bottle on table-where-B chair where Bert sat)

Aunty

She's fibbing. I can tell it by her eyes. Oh Jack, you've married
a terrible woman. Now my good girl, confess what did you do with it?
Yousurely didn't drink it all did you.

Bert

Aw, shut up! I tell you I didn't have it.

Aunty

(sees it on chair) Then whats it doing on your chair!

Bert

My chair!

Aunty

(holds it) See here!

Jack

Bella, I'm ashamed of you.

Robert

And so am I.

Bella

And so am I.

Aunty

Jack lets go in the other room. I do not care to remain in this person's
presence. When your wife decides that she can behave as a lady should.
let me know. (exits with bottle L 1) (Nose in air at Bert)

Bella

Yes, when you can behave like a lady, let us know. (exits L 1)

Robert
(same bus as rest of them) When you can behave like a lady, let us know.
(exit L 1)

Jack
(stands at door L 1) You're a hell of a wife! (exits L 1)

Bert
Yes, and you aint no knock out as a husband! I wonder what took that blamed old hen's whiskey any way. Theres something under that table. I'm going to look and see! (raises up table cloth)

Muggs
(jumps out, and jumps in dumb waiter, shooting a couple of times at Bert)

Bert
(lifting dresses up in air and running off L 1) Help! Ghost! Buglars!

***** NUMBER *****
TWO

(all enter after number)

Bert
I tell you I saw it. It was a ghost, or something, and it jumped in that dumb waiter there.

Aunty
Oh how romanitic. It must be a visitor of mine from the spirit world.

Jackm
Bella, you don't mean that you saw somebody go down the dumb waiter do you?

Aunty
Oh land sakes she wouldn't know after drinking all my Wine Elixer. Well, I've got to brush my teeth, and wash my face. (exits L 1)

Bert
I think I'll go wash my feet, and smoke a cigar. (exit R)

Jack
Wait a minute I'll go with you. I don't want aunty to see you doing anything you shouldn't. (exit R)

Robert
Well, Bella, how does it seem being back in your husbands apartment once more?

Bella
Oh, Robert, you don't know how I wish I could come back.

Robert
What did you ever leave him for?

Bella
Oh it was just a foolish little quarell, but he wasn't going to get the best of me. I told him that I'd never come back to him, and I meant it.

Robert
And still you want to come back back to him right now!

Bella
Robert, do you really think Jack loves me?

Robert
Oh I don't know, but I think he does.

Bella
He never does show it though. If he would only express himself, I might relent. I wish I could make him jealous.

Robert
Jealous?

Bella
Yes, Jealousy is always a sure test for love. Will you do me a favor?

Robert
What?

Bella

Pretend that you are in love with me, and let Jack see you embrace me.

Robert

And then have him take a couple of shots at me with a six shooter!

Bella

Oh now he wouldn't. I'd protect you. Please, Robert, just for a little while any way.

Robert

But, Bella, I---

Bella

(going over to him, and putting arm around him) Oh now, Robert----

Robert

Oh well, I'll risk it! (throws arms around her)

Aunty

(enters L 1) Oh for heavens sake!

Robert

(breaking away) Yeh, thats what I say?

Aunty

What does this mean, what does this mean?

Bella

Oh - ----er it means that we are engaged to be married.

Aunty

Well, how aint that too sweet for anything? When were you to be marriedK

Bella

Today.

Robert

Huh, were we?

Bella

Oh yes, but now we can't do it because we're quarantined and can't get a minister.

Aunty

Oh how sad, I feel for you. Do you two really love each other?

Bella

(putting arms around Robert) Oh I should say we do, don't we, Robert!

Robert

Uh huh!

Bella

Robert is the sweetest, nicest little man.

Jack

(enters R) Bella!

Aunty

Isn't this nice, Jack. We have a pair of lovers in our midst.

Jack

(looking at Robert) And I know somenody thats going to have a pair of black eyes in their dome in a minute!

Bert

(enters, his pants half way down, stops pulls them up) Well, whats happened now?

Aunty

Oh Bella, your friend is going to be married.

Bert

Is she?

Aunty

Yes, they were to be married today but couldn't get out to get a minister. Oh dear, and its bad luck to postpone a wedding day once it has been set.

Bert

Oh my goodness yes, never postpone a wedding date, in fact don't ever make one!

Aunty

I'll tell you what we'll do. I've read about it being done.

Bella

What?

Aunty

You can get married over the telephone!

Robert

Oh, no no!

Aunty

Why yes indeed. Its very fashionable. Just call up the minister, and he will read the service while all you two do is reply yes, and I do (joyously) We'll have a regular little wedding service right here. Since we are quarantined we must do something to entertain ourselves. Now, I'll go get the lace curtain in the other room, and we'll make a bridal veil for you, and Bella Jack's wife can be a bridesmaid.

Bert

Naw, I'd rather play the organ.

Aunty

But we have no organ.

Bert

Well, thats why I want to play it.

Aunty

You'll do nothing of the kind. You come in here and help me get things ready for the wedding. And Jack, you come along too, you are to be the best man!

Jack

Best man!

Aunty

(takes Bert and Jack's hand) Yes, come on. Oh I do so enjoy having people get married. (drags them out L 1)

Robert

Well, now what are we going to do?

Bella

Oh what a nice fix we're in now.

Robert

Jack's aunty certainly can fix things.

Bella

Robert, we must stop this some way. I know, we'll break the telephone.

Robert

I ought to break it over your head for getting me into this.

Bella

Go ahead, and pull it lose.

Robert

(pulls on phone) What will we do with it after we get it lose?

Bella

(looks around room) Hide it in the dumb waiter!

Robert

(takes phone and puts it in waiter) Fine now, what?

Bella

Well, we're safe for a little while. Oh did you see how angered Jack looked.

Robert

Yes thats cheerful for me.

Bella

He just looked like he could knife you.

Aunty

(enters with a lace curtain) Ah, now here is the bride's veil. Come now I'll put it on you. (puts it on her head)

Bert

(enters with a basket of flowers does burlesque hop about room, doing flower dance, throwing colored paper) Oh I'm a little flower girl. flower girl! (yanks up pants and falls in chair laughing)

Aunty
Now, we are all ready.

Jack
(enters) Aunt I say this wedding cannot take place?

Aunty
And why not?

Jack
Well, it----er----- He isn't good enough for her.

Aunty
Oh ridiculous! She loves him so what do you care. Now we'll just call up the minister. (starts for phone) Why where's the phone-----

Bella
The phone?

Robert
(innocently) Is it gone?

Jack
(looks at place where phone was) Great Scott, somebody has deliberately taken it out.

Bella
Now, we can't get married, can we?

Aunty
Oh now if that isn't just too bad. I'm going and lock myself up. If they carry away telephones, heaven only knows what they'd do to an innocent maiden. (exits L 10)

Bert
Yes, and heave only knows what they'd do to an innocent maiden like me. (yanks pants up and exits)

Jack
(looking at Bella and Robert) Now, just what is the meaning of this?

Bella
Well, what do you care, Jack. I am free to marry whom ever I choose.

Jack
(to Robert) And you call yourself my friend. A fine friend you are Engaged to Bella. Well, the day you have your wedding, will be the same day of your funeral. Mark my words.

Robert
Aw, Jack, don't get sore about a little thing like that.

Jack
Little thing! Is that what you call it. Oh!

Bella
Jack, you aren't jealous are you?

Jack
Yes, hang it, I am. Bella, you are mine, and I don't want any body else to have you.

Bella
Oh Jack!

Jack
Please won't you forget this crazy quarrell of hours, and come back to me?

Bella
Jack, really want me?

Jack
Yes, Bella, I do! (embraces her)

Aunty
(enters and sees them) Jack!

Jack
(breaking away) Oh---a hello, Aunty.

Aunty
What did I just see you do then

Jack
Why---er nothing, aunty.

Aunty
Young man, you were about to kiss that woman. (to Robert) Do you permit him to kiss your fiancée?

Robert
Oh he meant nothing by that I'm sure!

Aunty
Meant nothing.

Robert
You see, he was just showing me how to do it.

Jack
Oh yes that's it. He didn't know how to kiss her, and I did it for him.

Aunty
That sounds like fish to me, boy! I'm going to tell your wife, Jack.

Bert
(enters L 1) (carries a little baby's dress behind his back)

Jack
Well, go ahead and tell her.

Aunty
Oh, Bella, dear, your husband is false to you.

Bert
Is he?

Aunty
Yes, I found him in the arms of that woman. (points to Bella)

Bert
(seeing situation, smiles then puts on a tragic countenance) No! No! You don't mean that do you? (begins to howl in hankerchief)

Aunty
Yes. At first I thought that Jack was the one that should be pitied for marrying you, but now my heart goes out to you. You poor deceived woman.

Bert
Oh I can't believe my husband would trisel. Its too much! Me, a little innocent woman, and that big brute loving my girl friend. Oh I'm going to kick his brains out!

Jack
Oh, stop this nonsense. Aunty, I want to make a confession.

Aunty
I think you ought to.

Jack
I don't care if you do disinherit me, you shall now know the truth. That is not my wife!

Aunty
What!

Bert
Oh you brute, you dare deny that I am married to you. Oh cruel world, what's to be done in a case of this kind. Oh, aunty, (holds stomach) My heart is breaking!

Aunty
Don't cry, you poor dear, I'll stand up for you. He shall not defame you like this.

Jack
Now, stop it. Aunty, what I say is the truth I tell you.

Bert
(ala tragedienne) Jack, Jack! How could you. And me the loving wife that I have always been. Oh, aunty, its worse even now than you think. I'll tell you all. I've tried to hold my husband, I've tried to be a good wife. When you came auntie, you told me that we should have a little---well you knowp---Since then, I have been working to please you. Soon there will be a little tie that will bind us. (displays babies dress)

Muggs Bert

It sounded like some one coughing. Lets look and see. (opens waiter door)

Aunty

Theres nothing there.

Muggs

(taps several times)

Bert

What's that?

Aunty

Oh that must be the spirits of the other world.

Bert

Sounds like they're having a crap game, don't it.

Aunty

No, thats the way they signal to we mortals. You know my spirit guide might be in there.

Muggs

(pulls rope on dumb waiter)

Bert

Somebodys' pulling that rope.

Aunt

(takes ahold of rope) I'll see! I'll see. (hollers down waiter)

Are you my guide. If you are pull the rope.

Muggs

(pulls rope)

Aunt

Pull it three times!

Mugs

(pulls rope three times)

Aunty

Look! It is! It is! (begins pulling up rope, and up comes the telephone tied on to it) (sees telephone screams and exits)

Bert

Oh for crying out loud! That spook must a been a telephone girl!

Jack

(enters) Oh there you are.

Bert

Yes, here I are.

Jack

Listen, this deception and bunk has gone far enough. You're not going to make a fool of me. Take off those clothes.

Bert

How dare you ask a lady to disrobe, sir.

Jack

Now, listen, I said to cut it. You're through. My wife and I are made up, and I'm going to tell aunty the straitt of it.

Bert

No, you're not you asked me to be your wife, and now I'm going through with it.

Jack

(grabs dress) I say you won't!

Bert

Let go of me! You brute!

Jack

I'm gonna choke you to death! (grabs him and begins choking)

Bert

Help! Help! Aunty. Oh Aunty!

Aunty

(enters L L) Jack, stop that. Stop it. (shoves him away) Why you wretch how dare you!

Jack
Listen, aunty, you've got to listen to me.

Aunty
Indeed! Jack, I never thought of you as such a brute.

Bert
Oh, aunty, you don't know that man like I do! (sobs on her shoulder and fingers nose at Jack over aunty's shoulder)

Jack
Oh, when I get you where I can do what I want to.

Bella
(enters)

Aunty
Now, don't cry, Bella, I shall see that you are protected.

Jack
Listen, aunty, there stands my real wife (points to Bella)

Aunty
Jack! Your real wife.

Jack
Yes, she is the real Mrs Jack Willaims. This animal here is not even a woman. He's a friend I got to impersonate my wife.

Aunty
What for?

Jack
Well, Bella and I quarrelled. When I found out you were coming to see me, I knew I had to have a wife because I knew you didn't believe in separations. I got that thing over to play my wife, and if I had it to do all over again, I'd get a baboon instead of him.

Aunty
(to Bert) So!

Bert
(who is back close to dumb waiter) Now, aunty you mustn't believe him. He just lies something terrible. Why anybody to look at me could tell I was a perfect lady---a woman. (yanks up pants legs)

Aunty
(looking him over) Well, now I don't know about that.

Muggs
(reaches from waiter, and begins pulling Berts pants leg down)

Bert
You mean you doubt me.

Aunty
Come to think of it, you're a poor excuse for a woman.

Muggs- Bert
(yanks pants up) But I am a woman.

Muggs
(yanks pants down)

Aunty
What are you doing?

Bert
(silly grin) Nothing! Just got a bite that's all. (bus with Muggs)

Aunty
A light is beginning to dawn on me. The situation is looming up.

Bert
Yes, and my situation is coming down!

Muggs
(grabs both of his pants legs and pulls them way down)

Aunty
Ah ha! So you are a man after all! (yanks ribbon off his hair) Look at that hair, those mens trousers.

Jack
You see the truth now, aunty!

Bert

All right, I give up. But who's in that dumb waiter. (opens it, and drag out Mugs) Who are you?

Jack

Great Scott its a burglar!

Mugs

Yes, I broke in this madhouse the other night. Now call the cops I wanna get out of here. Jail would be a swell hotel to this nest. Listen, old wart face! (to Aunty)

Aunty

Sir!

Mugs

Yeh, I mean you, I'll give you the straight on the whole deal. I heard it all. These two just had a little quarrell, they both separated, but they're sorry, and are going to live together forever now. Now if you got any brains at all you won't be sore at 'em. You'll just let- fork over your money to 'em the same as ever. Thats my opinion of the matter.

Jack

Thank you, Mr Burglar.

Mugs

Don't mention it, bo. By the way, old lady, that hootch you drink as got a wallop like a herd of mules.

Aunty

Now I know where my Wine Elixer always went.

Robert

(enters R) Folks, good news for you.

All

What is it?

Robert

The quartane is off.

All

Hurrah!

Robert

They discovered that the Cooks and Janitor didn't have small pox at all; it was the chicken pox.

Mugs

Hot o' mighty let me out of here. (starts R) I'll call again some time -----like some much knit I will. And as for you (to Bert) You're a hell of a wife! (exits R)

Bella

Aunty, dear, can't you forgive us?

Aunty

Yes, I forgive you. I ought to thank the stars you aren't married to that thing, Jack! (looks at Bert)

Bella

Oh Jack! (to His arms)

Bert

Bella!

Aunty

Now aint that sweet!

Bella

He's the nicest husband aunty! I just love dear old Jack.

Aunty

Yes, dear old Jack!

Robert

Yes, dear old Jack!

Bert

Dear old Jack-----Asss!/

***** FINALE *****